

LEGISLATURE BEGINS END-OF-SESSION PUSH

After working a short week last week in partial compensation for a recess lost to a delayed Budget, the Legislature this week gets down to business considering hundreds of bills still awaiting action.

Of course, there are other issues confronting the Legislature as well – such as honoring the eight Senators and 25 Assembly Members who will be departing, directly and indirectly, via term limits (see article below). Two years ago, both houses devoted much of the “down time” during July’s Budget negotiations to this bi-annual task. This year, the tributes will compete with the other business facing the houses.

This week will be split between the final round of committee hearings -- principally the Appropriations Committees of the respective houses, which will consider the large “suspense files” (i.e., determine which bills with high price tags will live or die) – and floor sessions. The final two weeks will be devoted almost exclusively to floor sessions.

August 20 will be a key date in the process, for two reasons: First, it is the last day to amend bills on the floor of either house. And, second, bills sent to the Governor by that date must be signed or vetoed within the 12 calendar days before the August 31 Constitutional deadline. Bills sent to the Governor after that date fall into a constitutional “window” that permits them to be considered

TERM LIMITS TO TAKE 167 YEARS OF SENATORIAL EXPERIENCE

The impact of the term limits initiative adopted by the voters in 1990 perhaps will never be felt more profoundly than this year in the state Senate, when eight lawmakers boasting some 167 years of legislative experience are forced into retirement.

Six of the departing lawmakers will have served the full 14 years allowed by the initiative (six years in the Assembly and eight years in the Senate) – and in several cases (where their legislative service predated the adoption of the initiative) much more. The six are Senators [John Vasconcellos](#) (D-San Jose), 38 years; President pro Tem [John Burton](#) (D-San Francisco), 26 years; former Republican Leader [Ross Johnson](#) (R-Irvine), 26 years; Stanford professor [Byron Sher](#) (D-Stanford), 24 years; and former Republican Lader [Jim Brulte](#) (R-Rancho

Cucamonga) and [Dede Alpert](#) (D-San Diego), 14 years apiece.

Also termed out in the Senate are [Betty Karnette](#) (D-Long Beach), who is seeking to take her 12 years of experience back to the Assembly for a final term; and [Bruce McPherson](#) (R-Santa Cruz), an 11-year veteran. Another Senator who would have been termed out with 12 years experience, Sen. Pete Knight (R-Palmdale), died earlier in the year.



Burton



Vasconcellos



Sher



Brulte



Alpert



Johnson



Karnette



McPherson

Ironically, the four departing members with the greatest legislative experience (Burton, Vasconcellos, Sher, and Johnson) are also attorneys, promising a further depletion of the ranks of that profession in the Legislature.

CALIFORNIA PERFORMANCE REVIEW

On August 3, the California Performance Review Commission delivered its 2,500 page [California Performance Review](#) (CPR) to Governor Schwarzenegger.

The CPR, “a comprehensive examination of what government does and how it is done,” was initiated by the Governor last January, as part of his first state Budget. Schwarzenegger called it part of his “blowing up boxes” in Sacramento.

Although the CPR proposes numerous and sweeping changes in general government, it does not propose changes in the operation of either the courts or the State Bar.